

Remarks

In the office action mailed January 26, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 14-30 on grounds of alleged anticipation or obviousness, and the Examiner objected to claims 4-13 as depending from rejected base claims but indicated that claims 4-13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

In response to the Examiner's claim objections, Applicant has amended claim 4 to include all of the limitations of its parent claim 1, amended claims 14-21 to depend from claim 4 instead of claim 1, and cancelled claims 1-3 and 22-30. As a result, claims 4-13 are now allowable as indicated by the Examiner, and claims 14-21 are allowable because they depend from allowable claim 4. Claims 4-21 are thus in condition for allowance.

By making the amendments noted above, Applicant does not acquiesce in the claim rejections. However, Applicant has made the claim amendments without prejudice in order to expedite prosecution.

Now pending in this application are claims 4-21, of which claim 4 is independent and the remainder are dependent. For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and thus Applicant respectfully requests notice to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,
McDONNELL BOEHNEN
HULBERT & BERGHOFF LLP

Dated: February 9, 2006

By: 

Lawrence H. Aaronson
Reg. No. 35,818